viz media
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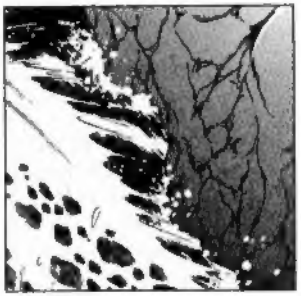
RED RIVER

12

story and art by Chie Shinohara

RED RIVER™



12

RED RIVER™

vol.12

Yuri, a typical junior high student, is sucked into a puddle and emerges in the ancient Hittite Empire! Evil Queen Nakia has drawn Yuri across time and space to be a sacrifice to her god, Teshub. Rescued by the handsome but arrogant Prince Kail, Yuri learns that returning home requires three things: the aid of a sorcerer equal to the queen, which Prince Kail happens to be; Hattusa's seven springs must all fill with water; and she must wear the clothes in which she arrived.

To recover her clothes, Yuri makes her way into the queen's palace with Kail's servant Tito at her side. But they walk into a trap, and Tito is killed after saving Yuri's life. When the opportunity finally arrives for Yuri to go home, she instead vows to stay until she has seen Tito avenged. Meanwhile, as the Hittites proclaim her the incarnation of the goddess Ishtar, Yuri becomes aware of Prince Kail's dream of creating an empire of justice.

Nakia has had the Hittite king assassinated, pinning the crime on Yuri. Kail sends Yuri to Alinna and seeming safety, but Nakia orders her private army—commanded by the true assassin, Urhi—to assail the town and bring Yuri back. Forced to flee, Yuri falls into the hands of the ambitious Egyptian warlord Ramses.

Back in the Hittite capital, Kail and his commanders champ at the bit to send their forces to Alinna, but they're obliged to wait until the king's assassin is dealt with. Ursula, a maidservant recently freed from Nakia's influence, chooses to confess to the crime, and with her execution Kail's forces are free to move. They break the siege of Alinna, and Kail even manages to free Yuri from Ramses. But Yuri has heard of Ursula's sacrifice and cannot accept it!

Story Thus Far:

Prince Kail
A Hittite royal prince, general, and priest-sorcerer.

Yuri
A Japanese schoolgirl magically transported to the ancient Hittite Empire.

Queen Nakia
Kail's stepmother, an evil sorceress determined to see her own son on the Hittite throne.

TARRUMP
TARRUMP
TARRUMP
TARRUMP
TARRUMP
TARRUMP

YURI!
DON'T RIDE SO FAST! STAY WITH US!
YURI!
SHE WON'T SLOW DOWN!
AND NO HORSE CAN KEEP UP WITH ASLAN!
HMPH! YURI AND HER HORSE ARE QUITE SPIRITED!

I'M NOT GOING TO LET URHI GET AWAY THIS TIME!
I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO BRING HIM BACK TO HATTUSA!
AND MAKE HIM REVEAL ALL HE KNOWS ABOUT THE CRIMES NAKIA HAS COMMITTED!
URSULA MUST BE PROVEN INNOCENT!

TARRUMP
RUSAFA!
TARRUMP
TARRUMP
TARRUMP
WHERE'S URHI?
HAVE YOU CAPTURED HIM?
PRINCESS YURI!
NOT YET.
HE'S HIDING SOMEWHERE OVER THERE.

WE THOUGHT WE'D BETTER WAIT FOR PRINCE KAIL'S ARRIVAL BEFORE ARRESTING HIM.
WE HAVE HIM CORNERED ON THAT OUTCROP.
I POSTED MEN AT ALL THE ESCAPE ROUTES, SO HE CAN'T GET AWAY.
THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY...
...THE CURRENT IS VERY STRONG HERE. NO ONE COULD REACH THE OTHER SIDE.
THE RED RIVER!
WHAT IF HE MANAGES TO SWIM ACROSS?
HE WAS HEADING WEST WHEN WE TRAPPED HIM BY THE RIVER.
IT SEEMS HE WAS TRYING TO FLEE THE COUNTRY.

KLAK
BRA
PRINCE KAIL!
EXCELLENT JOB, RUSAFA.
I'LL ARREST URHI NOW MYSELF!
I'LL COME WITH YOU!
I WON'T BE RECONCILED TO URSULA'S DEATH UNTIL HER INNOCENCE IS ESTABLISHED.
I DON'T ADVISE IT, PRINCE KAIL.
KASH IS RIGHT, SIR. WE'LL MAKE THE ARREST!
STAND BY, IN CASE HE TRIES TO ESCAPE.
URHI AND I HAVE A SCORE TO SETTLE.
I REALLY WON'T!

KAKROK
KAKROKKAKROK
BE CAREFUL, YURI.
I WILL...

KAK ROK
KAK ROK
KR OK TOK
YURI! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
Y-YES... I'M FINE.
THE CROWN PRINCE HAS TROUBLED TO COME HERE AND ARREST ME PERSON-ALLY?
I AM EXTREMELY HONORED, YOUR HIGHNESS!
!?

FWAP!
AND ISHTAR HAS DEIGNED TO ACCOMPANY HIM.
I'M FLATTERED. I HAD NOT REALIZED MY IMPORTANCE.
ONLY AS A WITNESS, URHI!
YOU HAVE TESTIMONY TO RENDER.
PRINCE KAIL!
SWIK

URHI!

KL
ANK
THE QUEEN DOWAGER HAS ABANDONED YOU!
BE SENSIBLE, URHI! YOU'RE ALL ALONE NOW!
SURRENDER... AND LIVE!!
WHAT FURTHER LOYALTY DO YOU OWE HER?

URHI!
PRINCE KAIL'S RIGHT! SURRENDER, I BEG YOU!
TELL THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THAT YOU ASSASSINATED THE KING AT THE BEHEST OF THE QUEEN DOWAGER!
DO THIS, AND PRINCE KAIL WILL BE MERCIFUL!
URHI!

KL
A
N
K
THD
DO YOU WANT TO DIE?
DON'T!

KILL ME!
I'D PREFER DEATH TO PRISON!

I SEE.
THEN I'LL HAVE TO USE FORCE TO TAKE YOU BACK TO HATTUSA.
...
SHE
!?
WHAT'S URHI DOING ?
WHOOOO

GASP
BEHIND HIM... THE RED RIVER!
NO... DON'T.
DON'T, URHI!
SMIRK

YURI!
GET BACK! DON'T—

YURI!

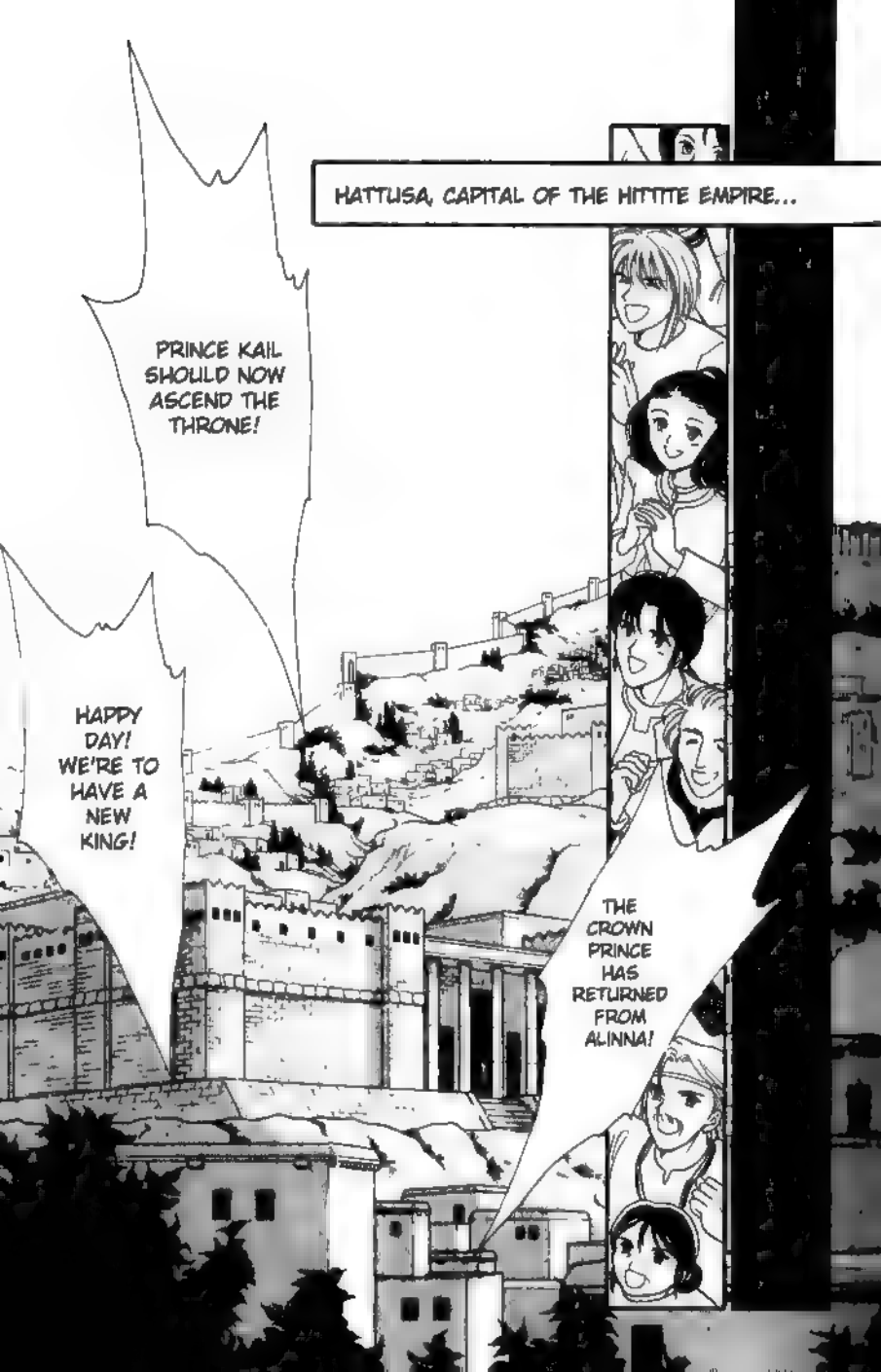
WHY?

RRR
WHY WOULD YOU SACRIFICE YOURSELF FOR NAKIA?!
URHIIII!
OOOO

PRINCESS YURI!
YOUR HIGHNESS!
WHAT A PITY!
IT'S A SHAME WE'RE DEPRIVED OF URHI'S TESTIMONY...
...BUT I BELIEVE WE CAN STILL EXPOSE THE QUEEN DOWAGER WITHOUT HIS CONFESSION.
"WHAT A PITY"?
IS THAT ALL YOU CAN SAY? THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT NAKIA! IT'S ALSO ABOUT URSULA!

HUH?!
SUCH COMPASSION, PRINCESS YURI...
...IS WHY THE PEOPLE ADORE YOU.
URSULA KNEW YOU WOULD SHED TEARS EVEN FOR A MAID.
THAT'S WHY SHE CHOSE TO SACRIFICE HERSELF.
SHE GAVE HER LIFE TO BRING OUR PEOPLE HOPE...A HOPE SHE EMBRACED WITH ALL HER HEART AND SOUL.
AND I KNOW SHE IS CONTENT WITH THE CHOICE SHE MADE.

URSULA IS CONTENT?
CAN THAT REALLY BE TRUE?
EVEN SO... I CAN'T ACCEPT YOUR DEATH!


HATTUSA, CAPITAL OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE...
PRINCE KAIL SHOULD NOW ASCEND THE THRONE!
HAPPY DAY! WE'RE TO HAVE A NEW KING!
THE CROWN PRINCE HAS RETURNED FROM ALINNA!

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS...
I AM HONORED TO REPORT THAT WE HAVE UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ENDORSE YOUR HIGHNESS, CROWN PRINCE KAIL...
...FOR ASCENSION TO THE THRONE.
AND WHAT IS THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S OPINION OF THE COUNCIL'S DECISION?

HER EXCELLENCY, THE QUEEN DOWAGER, HAS NOT EMERGED FROM HER PALACE TO ATTEND TODAY'S ASSEMBLY, YOUR HIGHNESS.
NONETHELESS...
...WE HAVE AGREED TO TAKE HER EXCELLENCY'S SILENCE AS A TACIT SIGN OF APPROVAL.
WE SHALL BEGIN PREPARATIONS FOR THE CORONATION AT ONCE!

PRINCE KAIL'S PALACE...
THEY'VE EVEN SET A DATE! IT'S REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN!
THERE'S TO BE A CORONA-TION!
...SHOULD BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AT THE CEREMONY!
SINCE SHE IS THE NEW KING'S SOLE CONCUBINE, HER RAIMENT...
OH MY! WHICH DRESS SHOULD PRINCESS YURI WEAR ON SO JOYOUS AN OCCASION?
I'M NOT ATTENDING THE CEREMONY.
I'LL PICK THE LOVELIEST PIECES...
AND THERE'S LOTS OF JEWELRY SHE'S NEVER WORN!
HURRAY!
I'LL SELECT THE LOVELI-EST DRESS FROM HER WARDROBE!

I BEG YOUR PARDON, PRINCESS YURI?
WHAT?

I SAID I'M NOT ATTENDING THE CORONA-TION.
IT WASN'T AN EASY DECISION, BUT...
...I'M AFRAID ATTENDING THE CORONA-TION MEANS ACCEPTING URSULA'S DEATH.

THE NEW KING IS TO BE ENTHRONED TODAY!
THE CORONATION CEREMONY BEGINS SOON!

I'M DYING TO SEE ISHTAR THERE, TOO!
AT LAST, PRINCE KAIL SHALL SIT ON THE HITTITE THRONE!
I HOPE WE CAN CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE NEW KING AT THE CEREMONY.
AND WITH ISHTAR PROTECTING HIM, OUR FUTURE IS SURE TO BE BRIGHT!

PRINCESS YURI..
I BEG YOU TO CHANGE YOUR DRESS, PLEASE.
THE CEREMONY WILL BE STARTING SOON.
I TOLD YOU I'M NOT GOING.
OH, PLEASE!
ILBANI TOLD ME TO MAKE SURE YOU WOULD BE THERE!
BUT DOESN'T CUSTOM DICTATE THAT CONCUBINES ARE NOT TO ATTEND A CORONATION?

IF YOU ATTEND PRINCE KAIL'S CORONATION...
...IT CAN BE OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT YOU ARE NOT MERELY PRINCE KAIL'S CONCUBINE.
CURRENTLY, YOU ARE KNOWN AS PRINCE KAIL'S ONLY CONCUBINE AND...
THAT'S PRECISELY WHY I WISH YOU TO ATTEND, PRINCESS YURI.
...AS ISHTAR, THE GODDESS OF WAR.
NEITHER, HOWEVER, GRANTS YOU OFFICIAL STATUS.
ILBANI..
I DON'T SEE ANY NEED FOR THAT.
BESIDES, YOU ALL KNOW THAT I'M NOT REALLY...
...PRINCE KAIL'S LOVER. I NEVER WAS.

PRINCE KAIL WILL SOON BE KING.
I CARE FOR HIM, BUT I CAN'T GET PAST HIS ACCEPTING URSULA'S DEATH SO EASILY. AND I HATE POLITICS.
I'M GOING BACK TO JAPAN SOON ANYWAY.
THIS IS A GOOD TIME FOR ME TO BEGIN PUTTING SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN MYSELF, THIS COUNTRY...AND PRINCE KAIL.
I WILL NOT ATTEND THE CORONATION. THAT'S FINAL!

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS...
I REALIZE MY DECISION TO CONVENE THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS PRIOR TO MY CORONATION IS UNUSUAL.
HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT I AM ASSUMING THE THRONE AS THE RESULT OF MY PREDECESSOR'S ASSASSINATION, I FEEL IT'S NECESSARY.

HONORED MINISTERS AND...
...BELOVED BROTHER PRINCES, I WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO...
...ASK FOR YOUR GUIDANCE AND COUNSEL AS I ASSUME THE THRONE. I HAVE MUCH TO LEARN AND WILL RELY ON YOUR WISDOM IN THE DAYS AHEAD.
WHAT IS HE GETTING AT?
WHY IS HE PUTTING ON THIS ACT OF HUMILITY?
I WOULD ASK MY BROTHER, PRINCE ROIS TELIPINU...
.. TO REMAIN AS THE MAYOR OF HELEB.
LIKEWISE, I WOULD LIKE PRINCE MALI PIYASILI TO CONTINUE TO...
...SERVE AS THE MAYOR OF KARKEMISH.
AS FOR...
...PRINCE JUDA HASUPASULLIPI...

...YOU ARE THE YOUNGEST OF US, AND HAVE ONLY KNOWN LIFE IN THE CAPITAL, BUT...
...YOU ARE NOW A FULL-GROWN MAN.
THEREFORE, AFTER THE CORONATION, I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TRAVEL TO KANESH...
MURMUR
MURMUR
MURMUR
...AND ASSUME THE OFFICE OF MAYOR THERE.
Y-YES, MY BROTHER...!

CURSE YOU, KAIL! YOU EXPELLED URHI, AND NOW YOU'RE SENDING MY SON OUT OF HATTUSA.
CLENCH
YOU MUST BE TRYING TO ISOLATE ME.

PRINCE KAIL!
WE HAVE TRIED TO SWAY HER, BUT PRINCESS YURI REFUSES TO ATTEND...
SIRE.
IT IS TIME FOR THE CERE-MONY.
ALL RIGHT.
I GUESS HER INNOCENT SPIRIT...
...REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE POLITICIAN IN ME.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP ONE'S HANDS SQUEAKY CLEAN IN THE WORLD OF POLITICS.
LEAVE HER ALONE.

FWAP
LET'S GO!
YES, SIR!
ROARRAAAH

RA
R
A
AA
HA
HA
HAIL TO HIS MAJESTY KING MURSILI!
LONG LIVE THE KING!

RAAAH
HERE COMES OUR NEW KING!
LOOK! THERE HE IS!
RAAAH

IN THE NAME OF THE SUPREME GOD OF TESHUP AND THE HITTITE PANTHEON...
...WE NOW ACKNOWL-EDGE KAIL MURSILI'S ASCENDANCE TO THE THRONE OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE.

RAAAH!
HURRAY!
HAIL TO OUR NEW KING!
RAAAAAH!
WAIT A MINUTE.
WHERE'S ISHTAR?
WHY ISN'T ISHTAR THERE?

MUR MUR
MUR MUR
MUR MUR
WE DON'T SEE ISHTAR.
THAT'S UNACCEPT-ABLE!
ISHTAR SHOULD BE STANDING AT THE SIDE OF PRINCE K...I MEAN, HIS MAJESTY KING KAIL MURSILI!
ISHTAR, PLEASE LET US SEE YOU!
ISHTAR
ISHTAR

ISHTAR
WHAT IS... THAT?

ISHTAR
...

ISHTAR
ISHTAR
ISHTAR
ISHTAR
PRINCESS YURI, DO YOU HEAR THAT?
SEEMS THE CITIZENS ARE MORE OPEN ABOUT THEIR WISHES THAN I AM.

ISHTAR
THE PEOPLE WANT TO SEE YOU!
RIGHT NOW! AT THEIR NEW KING'S SIDE.
ISHTAR
ISHTAR
IT'S NOW OR NEVER.
PLEASE, CHANGE INTO YOUR DRESS!
THEN GO OUT...AND TAKE YOUR PROPER PLACE.
PLEASE, PRINCESS !

ISHTAR
ISHTAR
ISHTAR
ISHTAR
HELP ME DRESS.
ALL RIGHT. I WILL ATTEND THE CEREMONY.
WHAT SHOULD I DO, YOUR MAJESTY? SHALL I HAVE ISHTAR BROUGHT HERE?
NO.
I'LL NOT HAVE HER HERE BY FORCE.

ROAR
B...BUT YOUR MAJESTY, THE PEOPLE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
THE CITIZENS WILL CALM DOWN EVENTUALLY, AND SOON GET USED TO SEEING ME ALONE.
HERE SHE COMES!
IF SHE ATTENDS THE CEREMONY, HER LIFE WILL BECOME MORE ENTANGLED WITH THAT OF OUR NATION...
...AND SHE MAY FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO LEAVE THIS PLACE AND RETURN TO JAPAN.
AND... FOR ME TO LET HER GO...

ROAR
IT'S HER! ISHTAR!
RAAAH
RAAAH
ISHTAR!

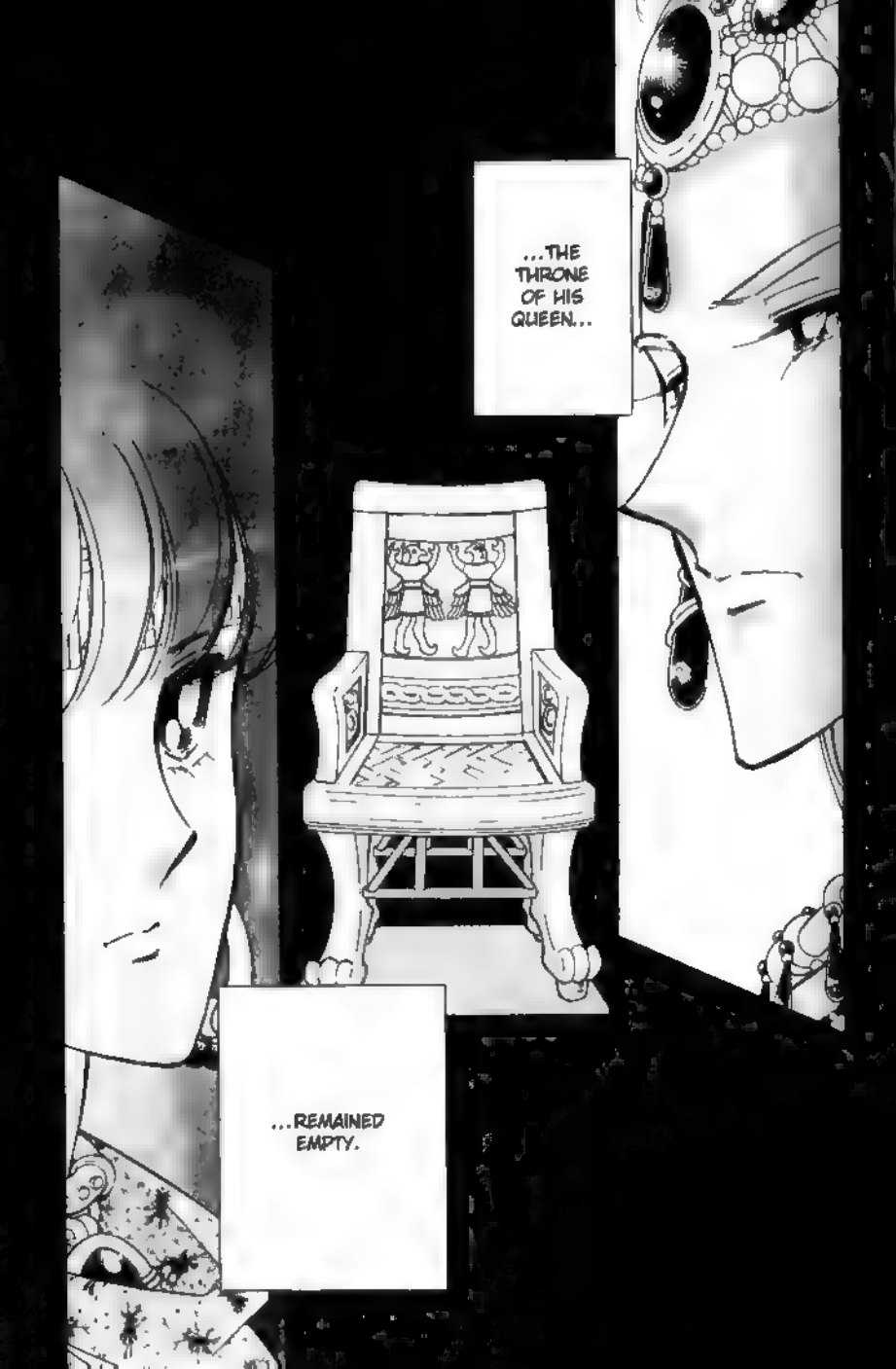
RA AA AH
ILBANI!
YURI!
SHE WAS TO OBTAIN AN OFFICIAL ACKNOWL-EDGEMENT THAT SHE IS THE NEW KING'S LADY.
THAT'S WHY SHE WAS TO APPEAR IN THE FORMAL DRESS OF A PRINCESS. WAS I NOT CLEAR?
WHY IS PRINCESS YURI DRESSED THAT WAY?
EXPLAIN THIS, HADI!
Y...YOU WERE, SIR. BUT PRINCESS YURI INSISTED ON WEARING THESE CLOTHES!
ROAR

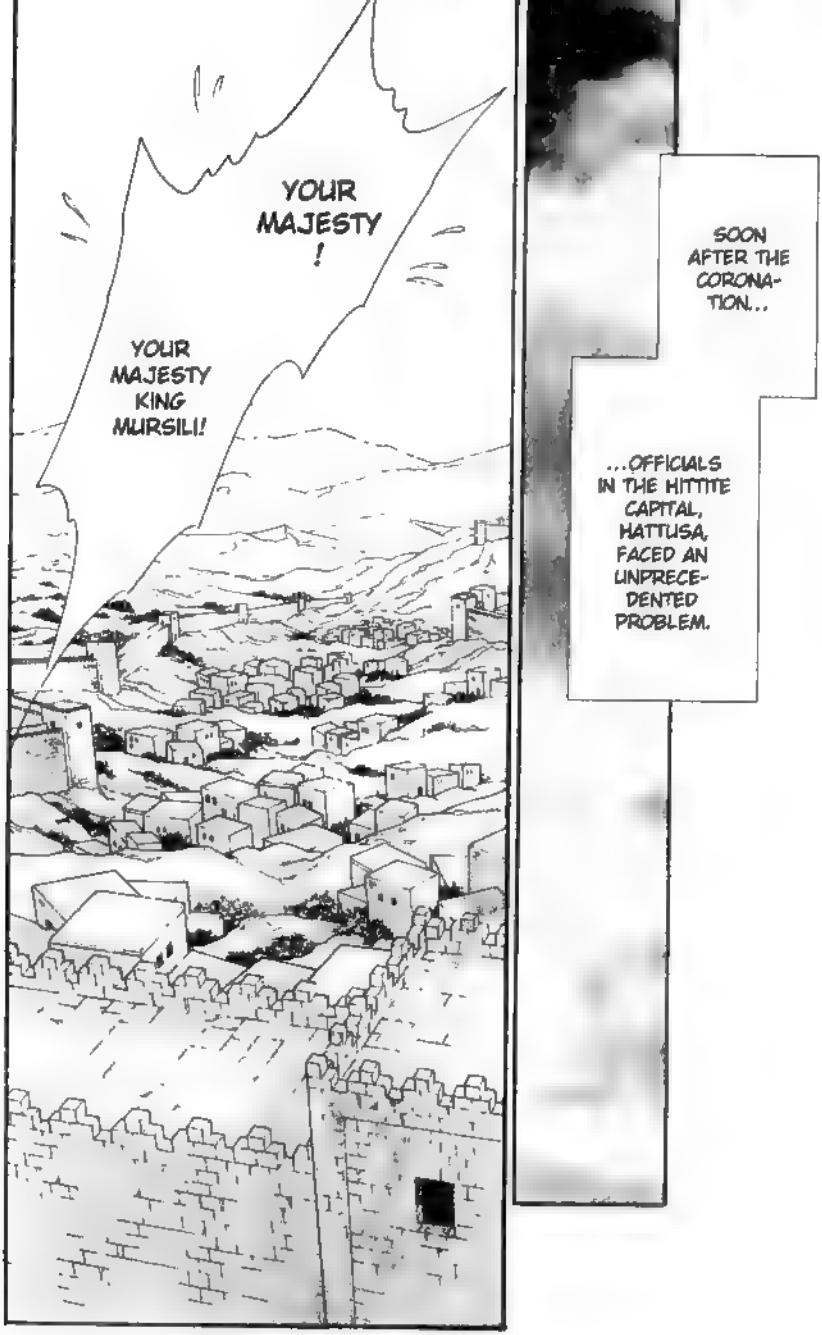
YOUR MAJESTY.
AS YOU KNOW, I CANNOT BE YOUR CONCUBINE.
HOW-EVER...

HOWEVER, IF I CAN BE OF USE TO YOU...
...I WILL BE CONTENT TO SERVE YOU...
...AS ISHTAR, UNTIL THE DAY I RETURN TO JAPAN.

AS ISHTAR, I EXTEND MY CONGRATULATIONS...
...FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, ON YOUR SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE.
THE HITTITE KING MURSILI II WAS ENTHRONED ON THIS DAY, AND HE WOULD LATER BRING ABOUT...
...THE GREATEST PERIOD OF PROSPERITY HIS EMPIRE HAD EVER KNOWN.

SNAP
CLENCH
ON THE OTHER HAND...


...THE THRONE OF HIS QUEEN...
...REMAINED EMPTY.


YOUR MAJESTY !
YOUR MAJESTY KING MURSILI!
SOON AFTER THE CORONA-TION...
...OFFICIALS IN THE HITTITE CAPITAL, HATTUSA, FACED AN UNPRECE-DENTED PROBLEM.

MAJESTY, I BEG YOU...
...DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!
I TOLD YOU...
...MR. SECRETARY OF THE LIBRARY ...
...TO DISPOSE OF THEM.
YOUR MAJESTY..
...THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM IS OVERWHELMING!
PLEASE LOOK AT THEM!

ALL THESE LETTERS COMING IN...
...ARE MARRIAGE PROPOSALS FOR YOU!
KLING KLANG CRASH
IF THIS SITUATION CONTINUES, HIGHNESS ...
Aagh! Another three men buried!
...MY ENTIRE LIBRARY STAFF WILL BE TOO INJURED TO PERFORM THEIR DUTIES!
YES...
...THE NEW RULER OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE, KING MURSILI II...
...REMAINS UNMARRIED.

HIS ONLY CONCUBINE HAS NOT YET GIVEN HIM CHILDREN.
THE NEW KING'S VAST WEALTH AND POWER, ALONG WITH INCREDIBLE GOOD LOOKS...
...HAVE CAUSED EVERY MEMBER OF THE ARISTOCRACY TO STRIVE TO SECURE A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM BY MARRIAGE.

WHY NOT TAKE TEN CONCUBINES, THEN GET TO KNOW THEM BEFORE CHOOSING ONE AS YOUR QUEEN?
Have a look at the list.
Here's a list of candidates.
MAJESTY...
...THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO CHOOSE A WIFE.
I'M BUSY WITH AFFAIRS OF STATE...
...WITH NO TIME TO THINK OF PERSONAL MATTERS!
ILBANI.
TROUBLES TEND TO OCCUR JUST BEFORE AND JUST AFTER A POWER SHIFT, SO STAY ALERT.
HOW IS THE RELOCATION GOING?
THE GRAND CHAMBERLAIN IS MOVING THE SERAGLIO RIGHT NOW.
AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED, SIR.
YOUR MAJESTY!

IT IS OUR CUSTOM THAT...
...A CROWN PRINCE MOVES TO THE KING'S PALACE WHEN HE SUCCEEDS TO THE THRONE, BUT...
...THE MOVE HAS NEVER BEEN THIS SIMPLE IN THE PAST.
SERAGLIO ...?
PRINCE KAL!
I MEAN THAT OUR NEW KING'S PRIVATE LIFE HAS BEEN AUSTERE, GRAND CHAMBERLAIN. THAT'S WHY THE MOVE IS SO EASY.
I AGREE!
HIS SERAGLIO IS ESPECIALLY. . MODEST.

KING MURSILI II'S COMPLETE SERAGLIO.
THREE MAIDS.
ONE CONCU-BINE.
SOME KINGS HAVE HAD MORE THAN A HUNDRED CONCUBINES.
IN ONE CASE, IT TOOK MORE THAN A MONTH TO ALLOCATE ROOMS TO ALL OF THEM...
I'M AFRAID THE 500 MAIDS ASSIGNED TO THE KING'S PALACE WILL LOSE THEIR JOBS!
Ha ha ha...
....HOW IRONIC TO BE MOVED TO THE KING'S SERAGLIO RIGHT AFTER I TELL HIM I WON'T BE HIS CONCUBINE!
HO-HUM...

TMP
HIS MAJESTY KING MURSILI!
PRINCE KA...
OH! IT'S NOW YOUR MAJESTY, RIGHT?

I DESPISE KAIL THE POLITICIAN, WHO SO EASILY ACCEPTS URSULA'S DEATH.
I CAN'T FORGIVE HIS COLD-NESS.
SO I TELL MYSELF ANYWAY, AND YET...
...

SO...
...ARE ALL YOUR THINGS MOVED YET?
WHAT THINGS?
THIS BOX IS ALL I HAVE.
ANY ROOM I WISH?
MISS ISHTAR, PLEASE USE ANY ROOM YOU WISH IN THE SERAGLIO.
ALL ROOMS ARE AVAILABLE.
YES, MA'AM.
ALL BUT THE LARGEST ROOM IN THE SOUTH WING, THAT IS.
FOR GENERATIONS THAT PARTICULAR ROOM HAS BEEN USED BY THE QUEEN... IT'S SORT OF RESERVED, YOU SEE.

A ROOM FOR...
...THE QUEEN...
PRINCESS YURI HAS BEEN SHARING A ROOM WITH HIS MAJESTY, GRAND CHAMBERLAIN.
MAY SHE NOT CONTINUE TO DO SO?
HA!... HEAD CHAMBER-MAID... NOW THAT HE IS THE KING OF THE EMPIRE...
... HIS MAJESTY WILL FIND THAT SITUATION INCONVENIENT WHEN HE BRINGS MORE CONCUBINES INTO THE PALACE.

W...WAIT, HADI!
SHE IS ALSO ISHTAR, THE GODDESS OF WAR!
BUT PRINCESS YURI IS NO ORDINARY CONCU-BINE!
YES, PRINCESS ?
I WILL HAVE A SEPARATE ROOM.
ISHTAR SHOULDN'T BREAK THE PALACE RULES.

AS LONG AS IT'S A SUNNY CHAMBER, I'LL BE FINE.
GRAND CHAMBERLAIN, WILL YOU CHOOSE ONE FOR ME?
CERTAINLY, MA'AM!
THE GRAND CHAMBERLAIN IS RIGHT.
I SHOULD KEEP MY DISTANCE FROM THE KING FROM NOW ON, OR I WON'T BE ABLE TO FORGET HIM WHEN I RETURN TO JAPAN.

I MUST STOP LOVING HIM! IT'S THE ONLY WAY!
I'VE OFTEN TRIED TO DENY MY LOVE FOR HIM BEFORE...
THE NEW KING WILL SOON HAVE TO TAKE A LAWFUL WIFE.
I DON'T THINK I CAN STAND SEEING THAT HAPPEN RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES!
I MUST ERASE MY FEELINGS FOR HIM AS SOON AS I CAN.
...BUT I MUST MAKE A REAL EFFORT THIS TIME.

YOUR MAJESTY...
...I'VE BROUGHT YOU YOUR NIGHTCAP OF WINE.
THANK YOU, KIKKURI.
THE EVENING BREEZE IS GETTING WARMER LATELY.
PEOPLE SAY SPRING MAY COME EARLY THIS YEAR.

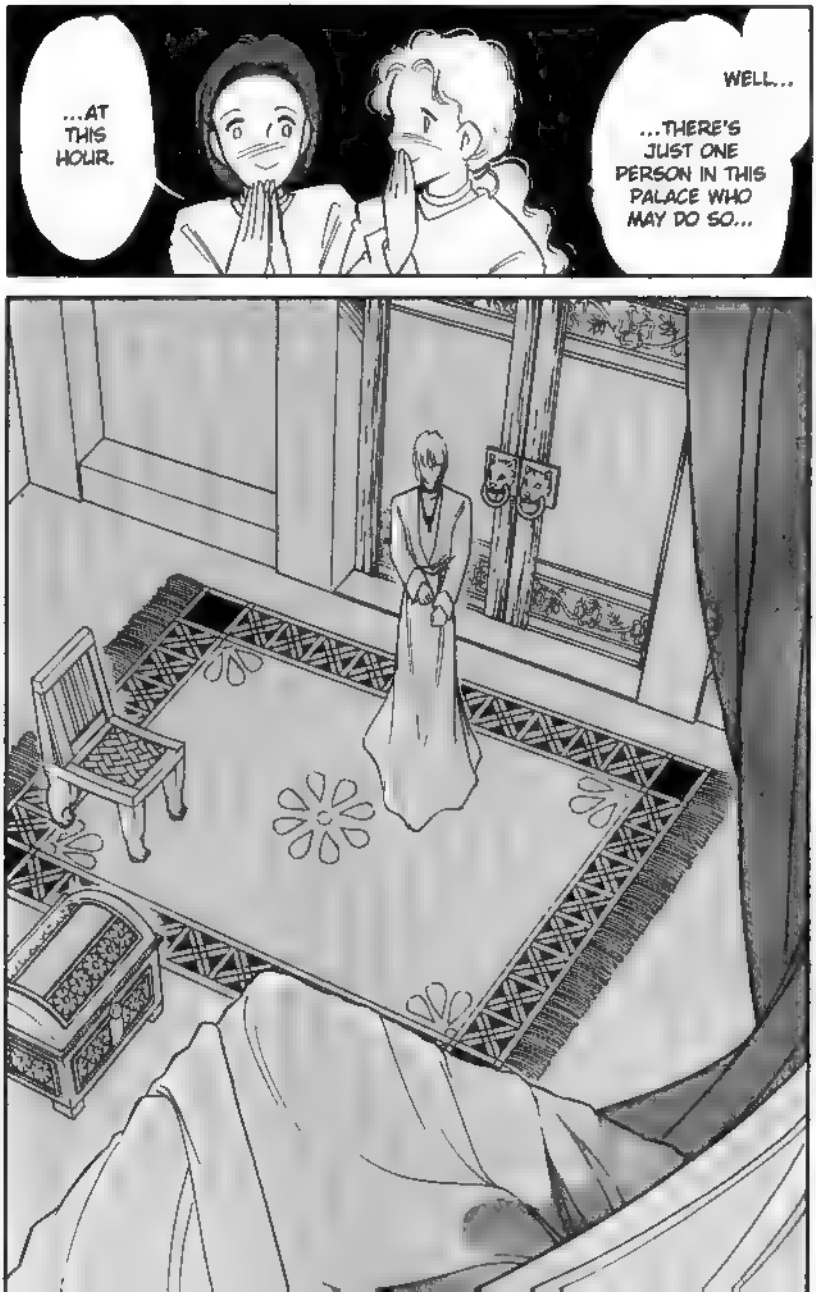
WITH SPRING, THE MORNING STAR WILL RISE AGAIN.
GASP
I'M...I'M SORRY, SIR. I JUST MEANT...
IT'S ALL RIGHT. WE SHOULD START PREPARING FOR THE NEW YEAR'S FESTIVAL SOON.
THAT WILL BE ALL, KIKKURI.
Y...YES, SIR. GOOD NIGHT.
CLINK
IT WILL BE...
...THE THIRD SPRING SINCE YURI CAME TO THIS COUNTRY...

HOW IRONIC IT IS...
...THAT THE ONE WOMAN I WANT FOR MY WIFE DOES NOT BELONG HERE.
WHEN WE FIRST MET, I HAD NO IDEA WHAT WAS IN STORE.
SHE CAME FROM A WORLD I DO NOT KNOW.
AND I MUST LET HER RETURN SOMEDAY.

...ANYONE!
...MORE THAN...
YET I LOVE HER...

...WHEN THE AIR IS FILLED WITH THE SWEET FRAGRANCE OF FLOWERS...
I KNOW I MUST ACCEPT WHAT MUST BE, BUT ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS....

...I FEEL... MOST UNACCEPTING...
CREAK CLICK
WHAT?
DID SOMEONE ENTER ISHTAR'S ROOM JUST NOW?


...AT THIS HOUR.
WELL...
...THERE'S JUST ONE PERSON IN THIS PALACE WHO MAY DO SO...

UMN...

PRINCE KAIL?!

NO!
YURI...
...BE MY WOMAN TONIGHT.

AH!
WHY IS HE...?
NO! PLEASE! STOP IT!
THIS ISN'T AT ALL LIKE HIM!
NO!
THIS... THIS IS RAMSES' WAY!

DON'T UTTER ANOTHER MAN'S NAME!
YOUR MAJESTY ...!
GASP
HE SCARES ME!

I HATE HIM LIKE THIS! HATE HIM!
ZOOOOO!!

AH!
STOP IT, KAIL!
THUD
STOP IT!
WHY? WHY IS HE DOING THIS NOW?
NOOO!
KAIL!

BE QUIET, YURI.
YOU CAN'T REJECT ME TONIGHT.
PRINCE... KAIL...

H... HELP...
...SOMEBODY...
...HE'S BEING TOO AGGRES-SIVE!
...SOME-BODY HEEELP!
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THIS.
HE WASN'T THIS FORCEFUL EVEN WHEN WE FIRST MET!
IT'S NOT RIGHT...

HELP!
...
WE CAN'T INTER-FERE.
WHAT CAN WE DO? SHE'S WITH HIS MAJESTY.
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
WAS... WAS THAT ISHTAR?
PRINCESS YURI!

NOBODY WILL COME.
STOP IT, YURI.
SOME-BODY...
...HELP!
I RULE THIS COUNTRY. I AM KING!
I CAN HAVE ANYTHING I WANT!
AND WHAT I WANT...
...IS YOU.
AH!

I WANT HER?
NO...
THE WORD 'WANT' DOESN'T BEGIN TO EXPRESS IT!
STOP IT!
SHE... IS EVERY-THING!
I WANT HER WITH ME FOREVER!

HADI...
HADI!
HADIIII!
TMP
SISTER! NO!!
OH NO...

BANG
YOUR MAJESTY!
I CRAVE YOUR PARDON!
I...I KNOW IT'S NOT MY PLACE, BUT...
...PLEASE ...PLEASE DO NOT DO THIS.
HADI?
I DIDN'T SUMMON YOU. GET OUT!
HADI!

I... I KNOW, YOUR MAJESTY, BUT...
...PLEASE ...I BEG YOU... DON'T DO THIS!
YURI IS MY CONCU-BINE.
THIS IS NOT YOUR CONCERN!
HADI!
PRINCESS YURI!

HIC
HIC
HIC
HIC
UNH...
UNHH...
SHIVER
SHIVER
SHIVER

PLIP
PLIP

I'M HERE, PRINCESS.
HADI!
TH.. THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY.
A REMARKABLE SCENE, HIGHNESS.

DON'T LECTURE ME, ILBANI.
...TONIGHT, YOUR TREATMENT OF PRINCESS YURI WAS CONTEMPT-IBLE.
IN AFFAIRS MILITARY OR ROMANTIC YOUR BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN ABOVE REPROACH, YET...
THAT IS NOT MY INTENTION, SIR.
IT IS NATURAL FOR A HEALTHY YOUNG MAN TO NEED A WOMAN FROM TIME TO TIME.
IF YOU'D LIKE, I CAN PROVIDE A PRETTY MAIDEN FOR YOU.
THERE ARE DOZENS OF YOUNG WOMEN ...
...WHO DREAM OF BEING WITH YOU, EVEN IF JUST FOR ONE NIGHT.

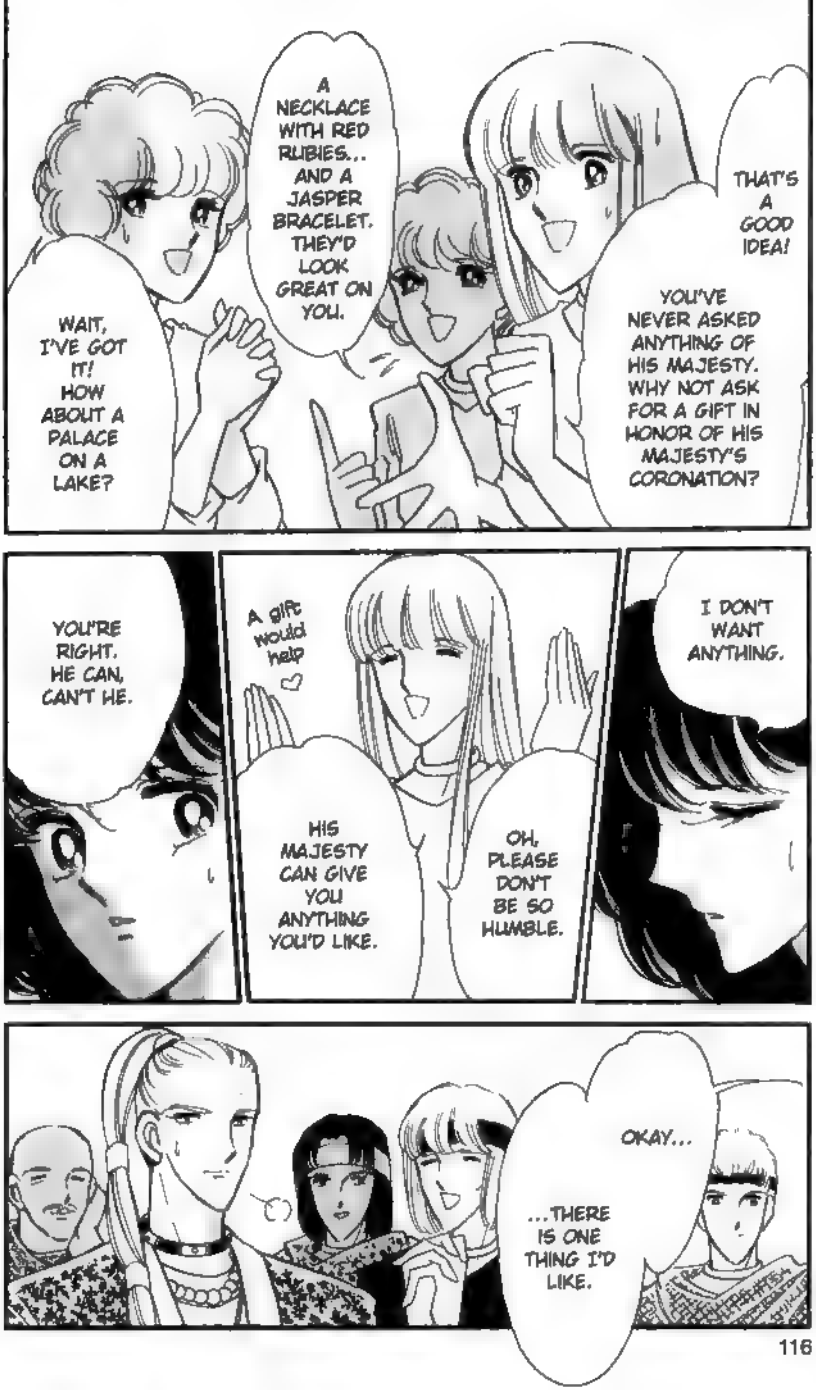
YOU'VE SAID YOUR PIECE...
...NOW LEAVE ME.
I AM NOT INTER-ESTED...
...IN OTHER WOMEN!

BUT...
...WE KEEP STUMBLING.
...WHY DON'T YOU SLEEP IN OUR ROOM?
AND WHEN YOU FINISH...
HIS MAJESTY ...
...REALLY CARES FOR YOU, YOU KNOW THAT.
SO PLEASE DON'T...
HIC
I KNOW.
I CARE FOR HIS MAJESTY, TOO.
PRIN-CESS YURI...
...DRINK THIS HOT LEMON JUICE. IT WILL SOOTHE YOU.

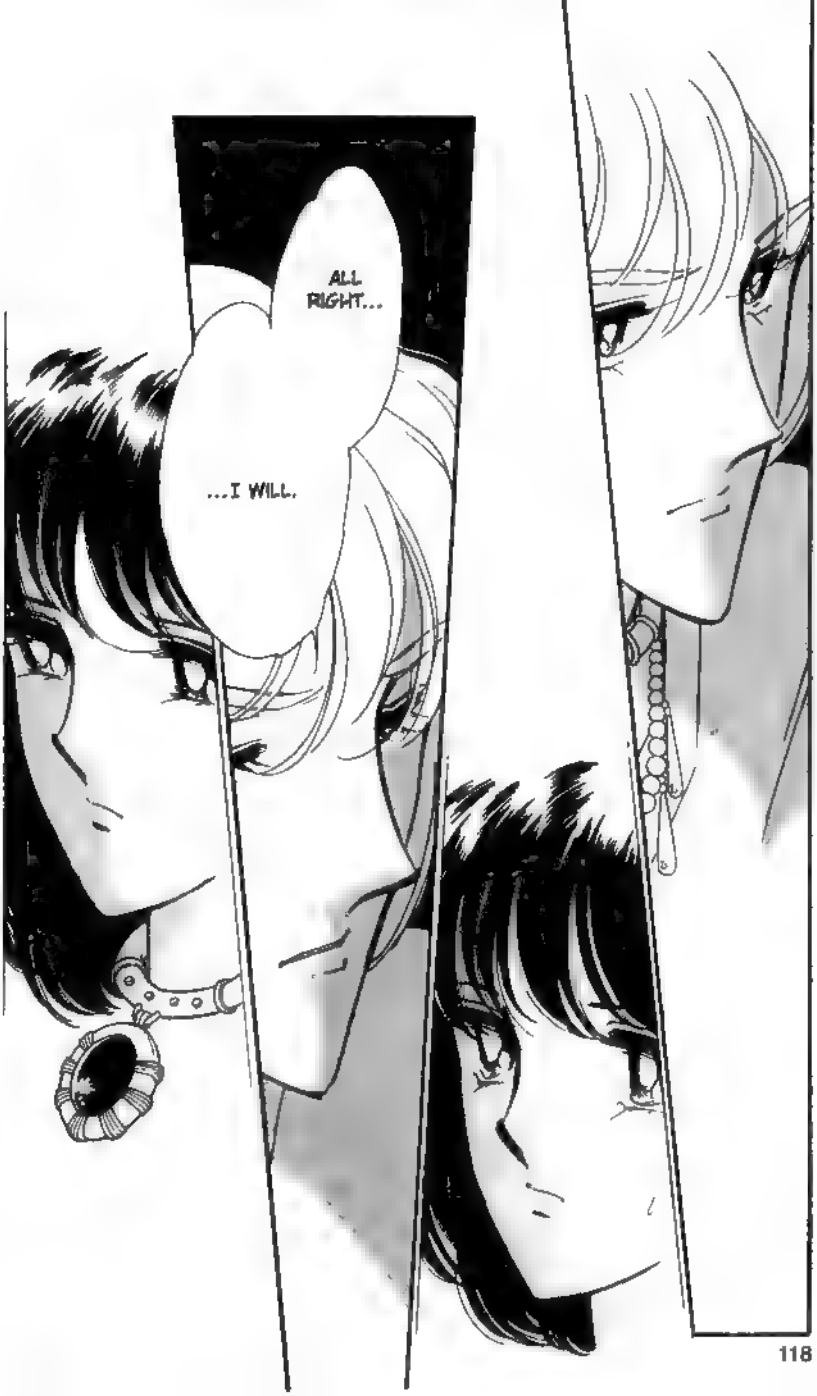
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I LOVE HIM..
...I KNOW THAT WE WERE NOT MEANT TO BE TOGETHER.

NOW THAT WE'VE DEFEATED THE MITANNIS...
...EGYPT MAY BE PREPARING TO ATTACK US.
B...BUT WE'VE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM THEM.
Y...YES, WE HAVE AN EXCELLENT ARMY...
HA HA HA... HA...
HUSH
HA...

...FOR THE BREAK-FAST TABLE, EH?
N...NOT AN APPRO-PRIATE SUBJECT...
HA HA HA
YOU.
CHEER THEM UP.
WHAT?
I HAVE AN IDEA!
PRINCESS YURI, WHY DON'T YOU ASK HIS MAJESTY FOR A GIFT?
WELL... UM...
...P... PRINCESS YURI IS SO SELFLESS AND...
Terrible segue...


WAIT, I'VE GOT IT! HOW ABOUT A PALACE ON A LAKE?
A NECKLACE WITH RED RUBIES... AND A JASPER BRACELET. THEY'D LOOK GREAT ON YOU.
THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!
YOU'VE NEVER ASKED ANYTHING OF HIS MAJESTY. WHY NOT ASK FOR A GIFT IN HONOR OF HIS MAJESTY'S CORONATION?
YOU'RE RIGHT. HE CAN, CAN'T HE.
A gift would help
HIS MAJESTY CAN GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE.
OH, PLEASE DON'T BE SO HUMBLE.
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING.
OKAY...
...THERE IS ONE THING I'D LIKE.

...THE NEXT TIME THE MORNING STAR APPEARS IN THE SKY...
YOUR MAJESTY...
...PLEASE SEND ME BACK TO JAPAN...


ALL RIGHT...
...I WILL.

My idea back-fired.
I'M SURE I'LL FORGET HIM...
...ONCE I RETURN TO JAPAN.
THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY.
Oh no...
I'LL TELL MYSELF IT WAS ALL JUST A STRANGE DREAM.

BEYKAL, A BORDER TOWN...
A SALT MER-CHANT?
ALL RIGHT, YOU MAY ENTER.
THANK YOU, SIR.

RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
LET'S GO!
ROAR!

THAT'S OUR FIRST PRIORITY!
HEAD FOR CITY HALL!
SAVE LOOTING FOR LATER!
SO WE'LL ATTACK FROM THE NORTH!
MOST OF THEIR SOLDIERS ARE IN THE EAST AND WEST OF THE CITY.
WHAT?
BUT THEY SEEM TO KNOW OUR MILITARY DISPOSITIONS!
I...I HAVE NO IDEA, SIR!
WHERE? BY WHOM?
MAYOR! WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!

SEND A MESSENGER TO HATTUSA!
TELL HIS MAJESTY WE NEED HELP! URGENTLY!
HEH...
HOW QUICKLY THE CITY IS FALLING.
THANKS TO YOUR INFORMATION, WE ARE EASILY...
...OVERWHELMING THE HITTITE GARRISON.
I AM MOST GRATEFUL TO YOU.

YOU'RE WEL-COME.
THE BEST IS YET TO COME, HOWEVER.
YOU'RE RIGHT!
WITH YOUR HELP, WE MAY BE ABLE TO ADVANCE ON HATTUSA!

SMIRK
FORWARD MEN!
WHAT WE DO TODAY ...
...WILL BE REMEMBERED BY FUTURE GENERA-TIONS!
THE FIRST WAR TO ERUPT IN..
...THE REIGN OF KING MURSILI II OCCURRED AT THE WESTERN END OF THE EMPIRE.

ARZAWA'S INVADED OUR TERRITORY?
WHAT?

YES, SIR.
ACCORDING TO THE MESSENGER, BEYKAL HAS ALREADY FALLEN.
WHY ARZAWA, THOUGH?
THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT SEEMED A LIKELY THREAT WAS EGYPT.
ARZAWA?
ARZAWA IS A SMALL COUNTRY ON THE EMPIRE'S WESTERN BORDER.
SMALL?
YES. THOUGH NO ALLY, IT MAKES NO SENSE THAT THEY'D DO THIS.

DOES IT MEAN ANOTHER WAR?
IL-BANI.
HOW MUCH TIME UNTIL THE MORNING STAR APPEARS?
ACCORDING TO OUR ASTRONOMER, ABOUT SIX MONTHS.
SIX MONTHS... TIME ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH THIS, I THINK.
DON'T WORRY, YURI.
I WILL KEEP MY PROMISE TO YOU.
I KNOW.
I TRUST YOU, YOUR MAJESTY.

PRE-PARE THE TROOPS TO MOVE OUT.
I WILL LEAD THE ARMY MYSELF!
FWAP
...AND THE CLOTHES I WORE THE DAY I ARRIVED.
IN ORDER TO RETURN TO JAPAN, I'LL NEED...
...THE MORNING STAR, A VIRTUOUS PRIEST...
I SHOULD GIVE THEM AN AIRING. THEY'VE BEEN STORED AWAY QUITE A WHILE.

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO SAY GOODBYE TO HIM!
PLEASE... DON'T WEAKEN MY RESOLVE.
ARE YOU REALLY GOING HOME, THEN?
OH, PRINCESS, WHY CAN'T YOU STAY WITH US?
WELL, I...
HIS MAJESTY WANTS YOU TO STAY! HE NEEDS YOU!
AND I KNOW YOU CARE FOR HIM!
STOP IT, HADI!

GO! I'LL HAVE SOMEONE ELSE HELP ME!
ENOUGH!
BUT PRINCESS YURI..
PRIN-CESS YURI...!
CAN SOMEONE GIVE ME A HAND HERE?
CAN I HELP YOU?
SWARM
YES, ISHTAR!
WELL... I ONLY NEED A COUPLE OF PEOPLE...
SWARM
SWARM

HADI AND HER SISTERS AREN'T THE ONLY MAIDS HERE. MOST OF US HAVE SERVED THIS SERAGLIO FOR MANY YEARS.
No, me! Let me do it!
I'll do it!
WHAT A GREAT DAY! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO CALL ON US!
YOUR COUNTRY MUST BE FILLED WITH WONDERS.
What unusual fabric!
ARE THESE FROM YOUR HOME COUNTRY?
CERTAINLY!
CAN YOU AIR OUT MY CLOTHES FOR ME?
O... OKAY.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I SHOULD FOCUS ON WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT GOING HOME.
YES...
...IT IS. MANY WONDERS.

IT WILL BE WONDERFUL!
WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I GET THERE?
FIRST, SOME HOME COOKING!
THEN A HOLIDAY TRIP WITH MY SISTERS!
PRIN-CESS YURI..

BUNN
BUNN
WHINNY
OH.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHINNY
LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER MESSEN-GER.
I WONDER WHAT SORT OF NEWS HE'S BROUGHT ?
LAD LAD
WHAT'S UP NOW?

I BRING NEWS, YOUR MAJESTY!
THE EGYPTIANS HAVE ATTACKED!
WHAT ?
UGARIT UNDER ATTACK?
THEY'VE MOVED AGAINST UGARIT!
UGARIT IS A CLOSE HITTITE ALLY.
THIS IS TANTAMOUNT TO ATTACKING THE EMPIRE!
FIRST ARZAWA, AND NOW EGYPT! I FIND THIS AN AMAZING COINCIDENCE!

WELL, PRINCESS...
KIKKURI...
...WHERE IS UGARIT?
Aegean Sea
The Hittite Empire
Hattusa
...IT'S AT THE SOUTH-EAST END OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE...
...BORDERING EGYPT.
Arzawa
Mediterranean Sea
Egypt
ARZAWA LIES TO THE WEST OF OUR EMPIRE.
Ugarit
SIMULTANEOUS... FROM BOTH SIDES!
A SIMULTANEOUS ATTACK FROM BOTH SIDES MEANS BIG TROUBLE!

YOUR MAJESTY ?
TOO AMAZING, IN FACT.
YOU'RE RIGHT, YOUR MAJESTY.
THESE ATTACKS ARE NO COINCI-DENCE. THEIR TIMING AND COORDINA-TION..
...SUG-GESTS THAT OUR ENEMIES HAD INTELLI-GENCE ON OUR TROOP DEPLOY-MENTS.
YOU MEAN THERE ARE SPIES OPERATING IN THE EMPIRE?
NO DOUBT.
WELL-PLACED ONES, TOO.. RIGHT INSIDE THE PALACE.

PRINCESS YURI.
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE SOME FRESH WILD STRAW-BERRIES?
YOU SHOULD LEAVE MILITARY MATTERS TO THE MEN.
EGYPT AND ARZAWA WILL PAY FOR INVADING OUR TERRI-TORIES, BUT...
...I'LL HOLD OFF ON DEPLOYING TROOPS IN EITHER DIRECTION FOR THE MOMENT.
SPIES ...
WE'RE IN TROUBLE AGAIN.
I WANT THOSE SPIES FERRETED OUT BEFORE WE COUNTER-ATTACK.
...
SURE.
I LOVE STRAW-BERRIES.
WONDER-FUL!

CACKLE
CACKLE
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SHOULDN'T YOU BE WITH PRINCESS YURI?
I'M AFRAID WE MADE A MISTAKE. WE SEEM TO HAVE...
...UPSET PRINCESS YURI A BIT.
WE SAID SHE SHOULD REMAIN HERE FOR HIS MAJESTY'S SAKE...
...BUT THE TRUTH IS, WE JUST HATE THE IDEA OF HER GOING AWAY.

I'M AFRAID WE ANNOYED HER BY...
...BEING RATHER TOO INSISTENT ABOUT IT.
SNIFF
...
FIND THOSE SPIES. THAT'S OUR FIRST PRIORITY.
DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN.
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WORKING IN THIS PALACE.
OH, YES... YOUR MAJESTY.

WHAT TERRIBLE TIMING!
RIGHT WHEN WE'RE OUT OF FAVOR WITH PRINCESS YURI.
SPIES...
I'M PLEASED THAT YOU LIKE THEM.
MM... THESE STRAWBERRIES ARE TASTY.
THIS STRAWBERRY LIQUOR IS ALSO QUITE DELICIOUS.
HE WORKS HERE AT THE PALACE, AND BEGGED TO BE INTRODUCED TO ISHTAR.
THIS MAN PICKED THE STRAW-BERRIES.
YES, IT'S VERY GOOD.

PRINCESS YURI.
HIC
MORE STRAW-BERRIES WOULD BE NICE...
THANKS.
LET ME KNOW IF I CAN BE OF SERVICE.
IT'S AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, ISHTAR.
GLUG GLUG
HADI, RYUI AND SHALA.
IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO FOR YOU?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE DAY OFF?
NO...
...THESE FOLKS ARE TAKING GOOD CARE OF ME.

THOSE HATTI GIRLS ARE COMMONERS, AREN'T THEY?
WHY DO YOU HAVE COMMONERS WORKING FOR YOU, ISHTAR? IT'S INAPPROPRI-ATE.
ALL OTHER PALACE MAIDS COME FROM ARISTOCRACY.
PLEASE LET US ATTEND TO YOU FROM NOW ON.
HIC
...HIS MAJESTY MUST OFTEN CONFIDE IN YOU, YES?
SINCE YOU ARE HIS MAJESTY'S FAVORITE...
SHO BE IT.
THIS IS REALLY DELISHUSH...

GUGHG
GUG
'CORSH HE DOES...
HO YESH!
HISH MAJESTY'SH NOTES ARE SHKATTERED ALL OVER MY ROOM...
MIGHT THAT INCLUDE POLITICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS?
IS THAT SO? WELL NOW...
HAH...
...THAT MAN IS...
I KNOW.

ZZZZ
SQUEAK

KLANK
GASP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU ARE A SPY, AREN'T YOU?
!!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
GUARDS! WE'VE FOUND A SPY!
WAIT!
WHOOP
DASH

EEE!
BANG
PRINCESS YURI!
EEE!
SOMEBODY, HELP! ISHTAR'S IN DANGER!
AH!
DON'T MOVE! IF YOU MOVE, I'LL KILL HER!
HADI!
RYU! AND SHALA!

DON'T ALLOW THOSE MAIDS TO LEAVE THE ROOM!
WHAT ?
KRAK
AH!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME?

STOMP
STOMP
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
ISHTAR!
PRINCESS YURI!
AUGH!
CRACK
YURI!

...WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
TELL ME...
WHAT?
I THOUGHT THAT MAN WAS THE SPY.
WHAT?
I'M SURE THEY'RE CARRYING CLAY TABLETS!
EXAMINE THESE WOMEN, YOUR MAJESTY!

HERE THEY ARE, SIR.
ON THESE WOMEN, AS PRINCESS YURI SUSPECTED.
WHAT ARE THESE ANYWAY?
WRETCHED HANDWRITING!
THEY'RE MY WRITING PRACTICE TABLETS, ACTUALLY.
THAT MAN THOUGHT THEY CONTAINED MILITARY SECRETS.
BUT HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE.
HE AND THESE MAIDS ARE IN CAHOOTS.
HE PASSED THEM THE TABLETS WHEN HE BUMPED INTO THEM.
PRINCESS YURI, DID YOU SUSPECT...
...FROM THE START THAT THEY WERE PALACE SPIES?
POFF
POFF
YEP.

I HAD TO WONDER WHY MAIDS FROM THE WEST WERE SUDDENLY SO EAGER TO CURRY MY FAVOR AFTER WE'D JUST BEEN ATTACKED BY ARZAWA.
YOU SEE, THEY SPEAK WITH A WESTERN ACCENT.
...BECAUSE WE'D DISPLEASED YOU?
SO YOU WEREN'T DISMISSING US...
NO, BECAUSE I TRUST THEM... AND THEY'RE MY FRIENDS.
BECAUSE THEY HAVE MY FAVOR?
YOU ASKED WHY I HAVE HADI AND HER SISTERS SERVE ME?

DISPLEASED ME?!
BECAUSE YOU'RE HONEST?
YOU THREE ARE LIKE BIG SISTERS TO ME! YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL ME ANYTHING YOU WANT!
PRINCESS YURI!

SO I'LL MAKE A PROMISE IN RETURN.
YOUR MAJESTY ...
...PROMISED TO SEND ME BACK TO JAPAN.
IF WAR CANNOT BE AVOIDED...
...YOU WILL NEED THE GODDESS OF WAR AT YOUR SIDE.
FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, UNTIL I RETURN TO MY COUNTRY ...

...I WILL BE YOUR GODDESS OF WAR..
...SO PEOPLE WILL REMEMBER THAT MURSILI II WENT INTO BATTLE WITH THE GRACE OF HEAVEN.

I PROMISE, YOUR MAJESTY...
...THAT I WILL DO MY BEST TO BE THE GREATEST ISHTAR IN HISTORY!

KING'S PALACE...
NOW THAT WE'VE CAPTURED THE SPIES WE CAN MOBILIZE OUR ARMY.
WHICH FRONT WILL YOU MARCH ON, YOUR MAJESTY ?
ARZAWA IN THE WEST, OR UGARIT IN THE EAST?
IT WON'T MATTER TO ME, YOUR MAJESTY !
YURI..
I KNOW I SHOULD GIVE UP MY LOVE FOR HIM, BUT...
THIS MAY WELL BE MY LAST JOURNEY WITH HIM.

...I WANT TO HAVE AS MUCH TIME WITH HIM AS I CAN.
IN UGARIT, WE'LL FACE THE EGYPTIANS.
MUR MUR
THEREFORE, I'LL LEAD MY FORCE TO ARZAWA.
THAT MAY PROVE A LONG CAMPAIGN...
...LONGER THAN I CAN AFFORD TO COMMIT TO RIGHT NOW.
TO ARZAWA...
GULP

...THE SPIES...
...WE CAPTURED HAVE BEEN MURDERED!
I'LL MUSTER THE TROOPS!
...
YOUR MAJESTY!
I MUST REPORT THAT...
WHAT ?!

OR NOTICE ANYTHING SUSPI-CIOUS?
I'M...I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, SIR!
DIDN'T YOU MONITOR THE VISITORS ?
POISONED!

...WANT THEM TO TALK.
SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T...
WHY?
WHO WOULD HAVE DONE THIS?
MOST LIKELY.
Why?
YOU MEAN...
...THE PERSON WHO HIRED THEM?
OH, NO!
I WAS TOO LATE!
YOUR MAJESTY!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
KIKKURI?

FOR THE QUEEN DOWAGER?!
NAKIA?!
I CHECKED THEIR BACK-GROUNDS AND FOUND OUT...
SHE PASSED HITTITE MILITARY SECRETS TO ARZAWA?
...THEY ALL WORKED FOR THE QUEEN DOWAGER WHEN SHE WAS LIVING IN THIS SERAGLIO!

CURSE HER!
I'D HOPED SHE WOULD LIE LOW WHILE ISOLATED IN HER PALACE.
I SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER.
YES SIR!
ARREST ANYONE WHO ATTEMPTS TO LEAVE HATTUSA WITHOUT PERMIS-SION!
DOUBLE THE WATCH ON THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S PALACE!
I'LL GO WITH YOU!
YUR!!
DASH

NAKIA HASN'T GIVEN UP...
...TRYING TO PLACE HER SON, PRINCE JUDA, ON THE THRONE.
WELL, I'M NOT LETTING HER GET IN KAIL'S WAY AGAIN!
PRINCESS YURI! LOOK!

SOMEONE'S RIDING OFF FROM QUEEN NAKIA'S PALACE.
WE'LL NAB HIM IF HE TRIES TO LEAVE THE CASTLE.
YES, MA'AM!
THE SPY WHO PASSED OUR SECRETS TO ARZAWA?
KLATT
RIGHT! LET'S ARREST HIM!
HE'S PASSING THROUGH THE GATE!

KLOP
KLOP
KLATTA
KLATTA
KLAT
KLATTA
AH!
GIDDYUP, ASLAN!
HE'S NOT GETTING AWAY!

WUP
THUD
FWAP
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
ARE YOU FROM ARZAWA?

A MAN WITH HONEY-COLORED SKIN!
AN... EGYPTIAN?
UNGH
YES!
PRINCESS YURI! ARE YOU OKAY?

THE FOOL BIT HIS TONGUE!
SLUMP
OH!
I WONDER ...
BUT WHY WAS AN EGYPTIAN AT THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S PALACE?
...IF QUEEN NAKIA IS PROVIDING INFORMATION TO EGYPT...?
...WHAT IT COULD MEAN...

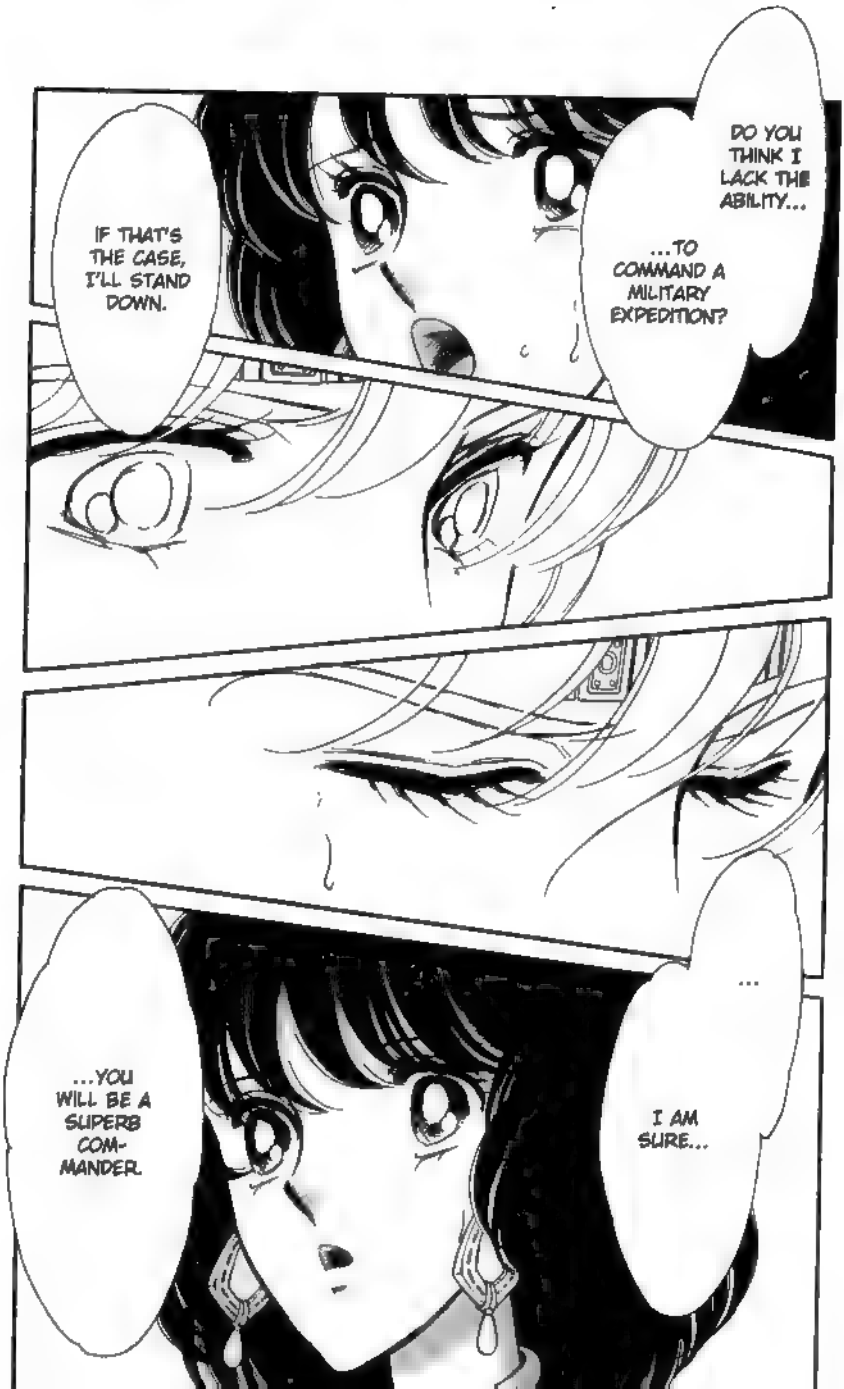
KING'S PALACE...
I BELIEVE...
...PRINCESS YURI IS RIGHT ABOUT ALL THIS.
YES...
WHAT?
...THIS CHANGES OUR STRATEGY. WE CAN'T IGNORE THE SITUATION IN UGARIT TO FOCUS ON ARZAWA.
...WE WERE UNDER SIMULTANEOUS ATTACK ON TWO FLANKS.
WE SHOULD HAVE CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY WHEN WE LEARNED...

WE MUST TACKLE BOTH FRONTS AT THE SAME TIME.
EXACTLY.
IF WE RESPOND ONLY AT ARZAWA, THE QUEEN DOWAGER WILL SEE THAT THE ATTACK IS INTENSIFIED AT UGARIT.
PRINCE ZANNANZA WOULD HAVE BEEN IDEALLY SUITED FOR THAT...
IT WILL REQUIRE A CHARISMATIC, ARISTOCRATIC LEADER.
OH NO!
WE CAN'T ASSUME THAT ROLE!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
KASH OR RUSAFA CAN DO THAT, CAN'T THEY?
THE QUESTION IS...
...WHO WILL COMMAND ON THE OTHER FRONT?
...MUST LEAD AN ARMY IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM HIS MAJESTY'S TROOPS.
THE SECOND COMMANDER...

...WHAT ABOUT ME?
DO YOU THINK THE SOLDIERS WOULD ACCEPT ISHTAR AS THEIR COMMANDER?
YOUR MAJESTY...
...I'M NOT DESTINED TO STAY WITH THE MAN I LOVE.
I'M AFRAID...

ANYWAY, YOU'RE TO RETURN TO JAPAN IN SIX MONTHS!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, YURI!
I CAN'T SEND YOU INTO BATTLE WITHOUT ME!
I'LL BE BACK BEFORE THE MORNING STAR RISES AGAIN!
SO I'LL GO TO ARZAWA!
I MAY NOT BE THE BEST CHOICE FOR THE JOB...
...BUT I'LL DO THE BEST I CAN! YOU KNOW I WILL!
PRINCESS YURI, IF YOU GO TO ARZAWA...
...YOU'LL NEVER SEE HIS MAJESTY AGAIN!

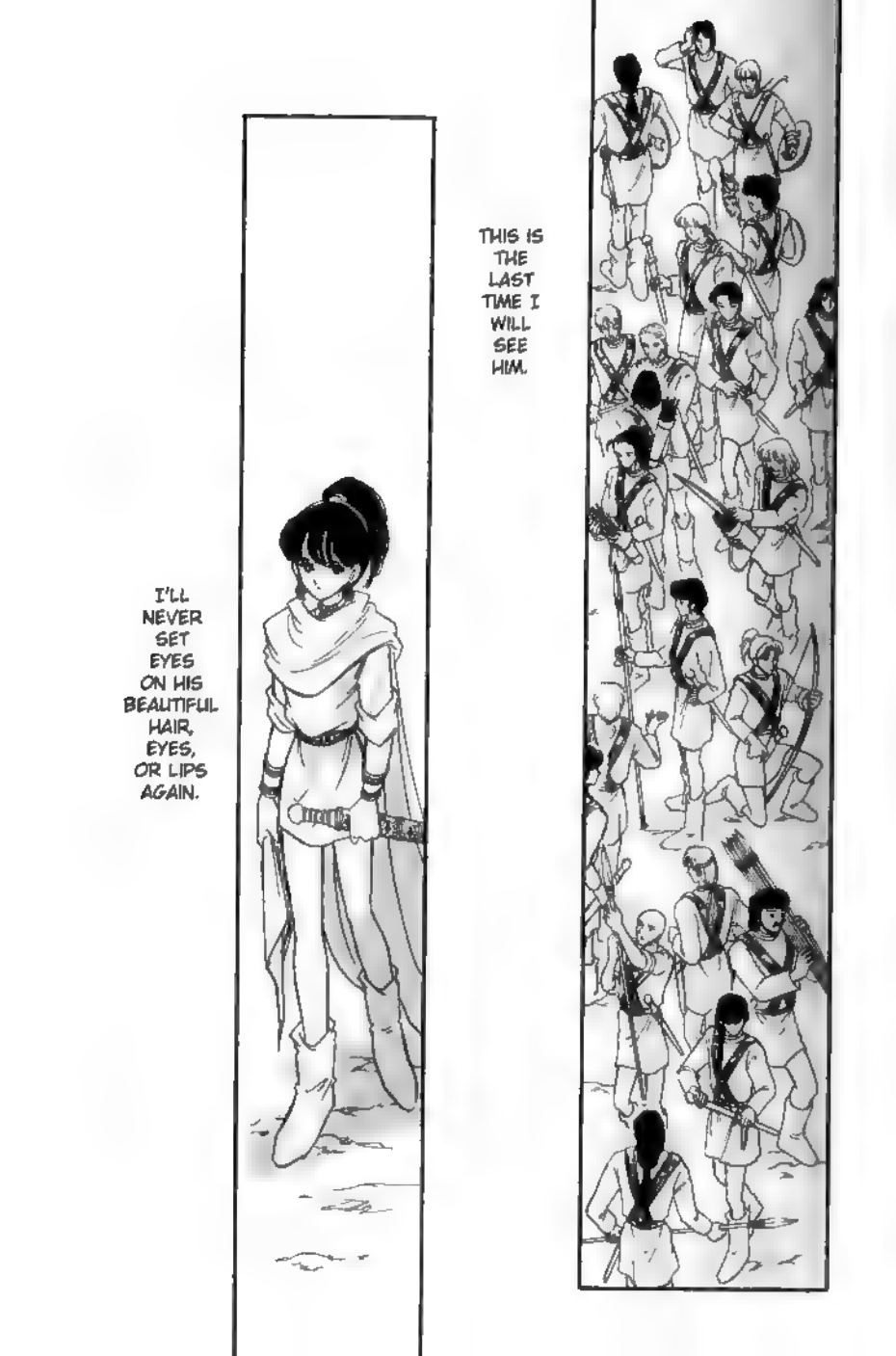
YURI...
...COME WITH ME!
...
WE WERE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION LAST YEAR, WEREN'T WE?
I DON'T WANT TO LET YOU GO!
THE DIFFERENCE WAS... WE FOUGHT ON THE SAME BATTLE-FIELD.


DO YOU THINK I LACK THE ABILITY...
...TO COMMAND A MILITARY EXPEDITION?
IF THAT'S THE CASE, I'LL STAND DOWN.
...
I AM SURE...
...YOU WILL BE A SUPERB COM-MANDER.

THEN SEND ME, YOUR MAJESTY!
AS MY SOVEREIGN, GIVE THE ORDER FOR ME TO GO TO ARZAWA!

AS YOU WISH.
YOU TOO, ILBANI.
YOUR MAJESTY ?!
YOU WILL GO WITH YURI TO ARZAWA.
YES, YOUR MAJESTY ?
KASH, RUSAFA, MITTANNAMWA ...
YOUR MAJESTY...
...YOU MEAN TO...

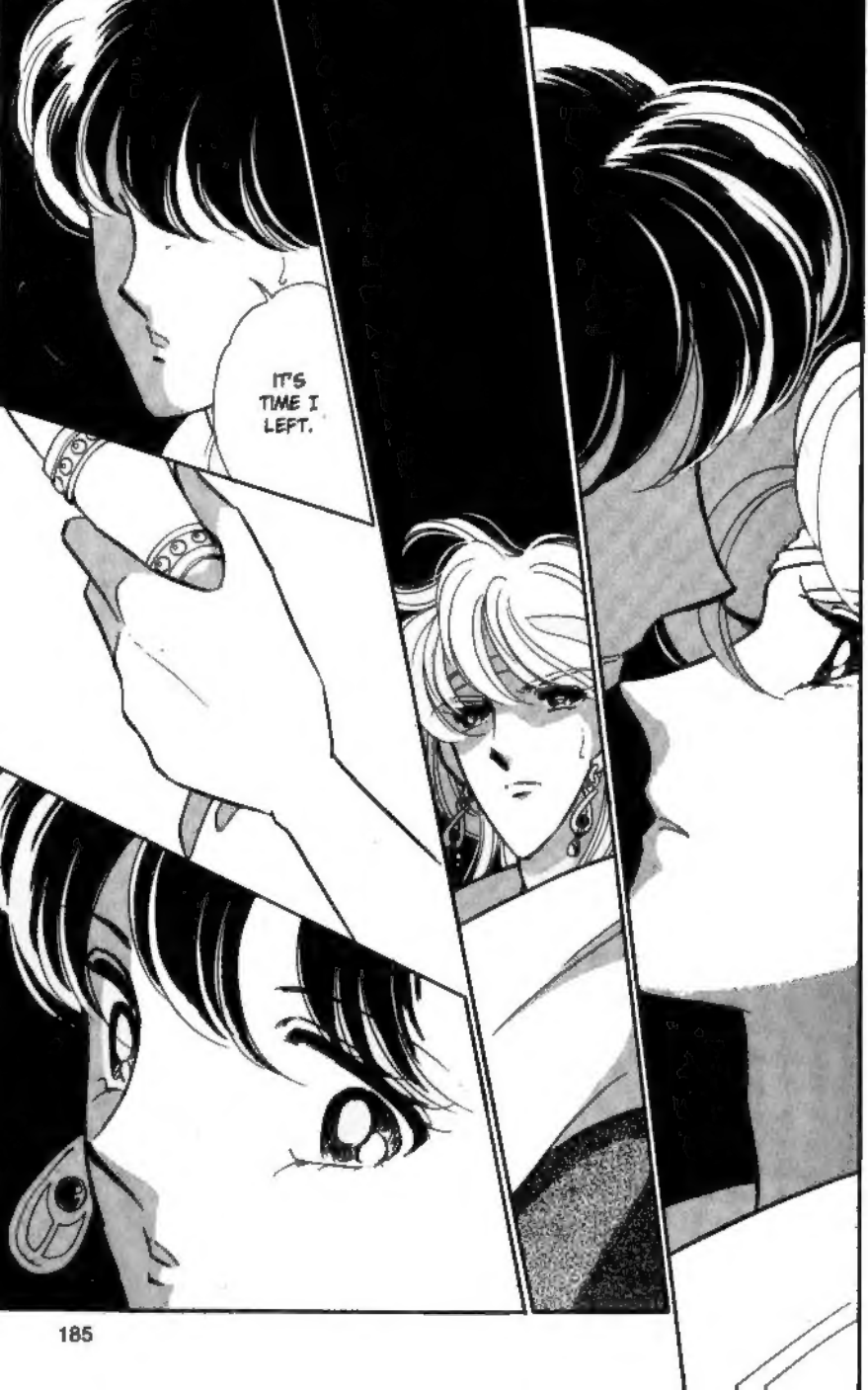
YURI ISHTAR..
...LEAD OUR MILITARY EXPEDITION TO BEYKAL AND BEAT BACK ARZAWA'S INVASION!
ROAR


THIS IS THE LAST TIME I WILL SEE HIM.
I'LL NEVER SET EYES ON HIS BEAUTIFUL HAIR, EYES, OR LIPS AGAIN.

RAAH!
ROAR
YOUR MAJESTY.
YURI..
...WHEN YOU RETURN TO HATTUSA, I'LL BE IN UGARIT.
I WON'T BE HERE WHEN IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE.
YOU CAN TRUST HER.
...MY HALF SISTER, THE PRIESTESS OF THE THIRD TEMPLE.
I WILL HAVE ANOTHER PRIEST ASSIST YOU IN YOUR DEPARTURE...
YOUR MAJESTY...
I WISH YOU A SAFE RETURN TO JAPAN.

YOUR MAJESTY, I PART WITH YOU TODAY...
...BUT I WILL LEAVE...
I WILL CARRY MY LOVE FOR YOU ALWAYS.
...IN YOUR HANDS...

...THE FATE...
...OF THE ORIENT!


IT'S TIME I LEFT.

SWUSS
CLICK
IS

WEAR IT.
THIS IS MY HEADBAND... I HAD IT ADJUSTED TO FIT YOU.
TROOPS OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE!
TO ARZAWA!

YURI!
...I LEAVE THE FATE OF YOUR WORLD IN YOUR HANDS.

I'LL NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN, BUT...